UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER
HANNE, SARA M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2179	

DATE MAILED: 09/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 10/03)

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _3_ MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed
  after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any
  earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is
closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) _1-18_ is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) _1-18_ is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on _2/28/02_ is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☒ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

        1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

        2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

        3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage
application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _2/28/02_.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1.   Claims 1-18 are objected to because of the following informalities: The use of

punctuation is improper throughout the claims and replete in many places. For

example: line 13 of in Claim 1 should read: "accumulating messages posted to the

virtual community," and line 3 of Claim 2 should read: "that a client terminal, as an

access request source, can make". There should be commas used as such multiple

places throughout the claims for clarification purposes. Appropriate correction is

required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2.   The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that

form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by
> another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent
> granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the
> applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section
> 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States
> only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2)
> of such treaty in the English language.

3.   Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Block et

al., US Patent Application Publication 2003/0050976.

        As in Claims 1, 7 and 13, Block et al. teaches a community-based collaborative

knowledge system, method and program for client terminals comprising an access

control means for making user authentication of a client terminal as an access request

source so as to permit the client terminal to post a message ("providing access to post/retrieve information", Par. 11) and community processing means for managing a virtual community in which plurality of client terminals can participate, and categorizing and accumulating messages posted, to the virtual community, from the client terminals, which are granted access permission by said access control means, for respective topics (various pages of Figure 2 and corresponding text), the community processing means including: user access limiting means managing community type indicating an open level of each virtual community (X=access for page), and a member type indicating a participation attribute of a user to the virtual community (anonymous visitor, invited guest, participant, administrator), and determining user's access authority of each client terminal using a combination of the community type and member type for each virtual community as an access destination ("persons can have access to different information based upon the particular access level assigned to that person in relation to a specific community", Par. 18).

As in Claims 2, 8 and 14, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program wherein the user access limiting means determines an access that a client terminal, as an access request source, can make on the basis of the combination of the community type and member type, and provides a window which allows only the determined to access the client terminal as the access request source (Par. 15 et seq.).

As in Claims 3, 9 and 15, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program wherein the virtual community has a

community type "membership" for only a group of authorized members (Administrators may view and edit all contents of the page), the user access limiting means permits a user whose member type for the virtual community is "member" to post and browse messages ("providing access to post/retrieve information", Par. 11), and inhibits user whose member type for the virtual community is unauthorized, "anonymous member" (Figure 2, "Anonymous visitor") from posting and browsing messages (no access, ref. 202).

As in Claims 4, 10 and 16, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program wherein the community processing means further comprises means for managing summary messages which summarize messages accumulated in the virtual community for respective topics (pages), and when the virtual community has a community type "membership" for only a group of authorized members (administrators), the user access limiting means permits a user whose member type for the virtual community is "member", to post and browse all messages (See the rejection on Claim 3 *supra*), including summary messages ("The personal home page, and the pages linked behind it, display summaries of the information to which the individual has access", Par. 25), and permits a user whose member type for the virtual community is unauthorized "intending member" or "anonymous member" to browse only summary messages having an open attribute of the summary messages in the virtual community (Par. 15 and Figure 2).

As in Claims 5, 11 and 17, Block et al. teaches the community-based collaborative knowledge system, method and program wherein the community types of

each virtual community includes "open" that allows everyone to participate (League

Home and Team Home are open to everyone), "membership" for only a group of

authorized members (viewing "can see more" only by invite), and "closed" that is not

open to the public other than authorized members (viewing the "still more" content only

by participants), the member type indicating the participation attribute of the user

includes "member" who has been authorized to participate (Participant), "temporary

registered member" who is temporarily registered as a member (Invited Guest),

"intending member" who has applied to participate but has not been authorized to

participate yet (Par. 30), and "other" (anonymous visitor) and the user access limiting

means determines accesses that the client terminal, as the access request source can

make on the basis of combinations between "open", "membership", and "closed"

community types, and the "member", "temporary registered member", "intending

member", and "other" member types (Figure 2 and corresponding text).

As in Claims 6, 12 and 18, Block et al. teaches the community-based

collaborative knowledge system, method and program for searching messages

accumulated in virtual communities in response to a search request from the client

terminal (request My Messages ref. 316), and wherein the user access limiting means

provides a search result list consisting of message search results that browse authority

of the client terminal as the search request source can cover of messages which match

the search result on the basis of a combination of the community type of the virtual

community which is to undergo search, and the member type of the client terminal as

the search request source for the virtual community (Par. 121-122).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record on form PTO-892 and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Applicant is required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111(c) to consider these references fully when responding to this action. The documents cited therein teach similar message posting systems with access control levels for both the user and communities combined.

If a copy of a provisional application listed on the bottom portion of the accompanying Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) form is not included with this Office action and the PTO-892 has been annotated to indicate that the copy was not readily available, it is because the copy could not be readily obtained when the Office action was mailed. Should applicant desire a copy of such a provisional application, applicant should promptly request the copy from the Office of Public Records (OPR) in accordance with 37 CFR 1.14(a)(1)(iv), paying the required fee under 37 CFR 1.19(b)(1). If a copy is ordered from OPR, the shortened statutory period for reply to this Office action will not be reset under MPEP § 710.06 unless applicant can demonstrate a substantial delay by the Office in fulfilling the order for the copy of the provisional application. Where the applicant has been notified on the PTO-892 that a copy of the provisional application is not readily available, the provision of MPEP § 707.05(a) that a copy of the cited reference will be automatically furnished without charge does not apply.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sara M Hanne whose telephone number is (703) 305-0703. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30am-4:00pm, off on alternating Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather R Herndon can be reached on (703) 308-5186. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

smh

BA HUYNH
PRIMARY EXAMINER